

SMITH Mayor,

*Martis, 28 die Aprilis 1685. Annoq;
Regis Jacobi Secundi, Angliae, &c.
primo.*

THIS Court doth desire Dr. *Ha-*
scard, Dean of *Windsor*, to print
his Sermon preached at the Pa-
rish-Church of St. *Botolph Aldgate*, be-
fore the Lord Mayor and Aldermen
of this City, and Governours of the
Hospitals, on *Tuesday* in *Easter* week
last.

Wagstaffe.

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A *Charity*
SERMON
PREACHED
Before the Right Honourable the
LORD MAYOR
Sir *JAMES SMITH,*

The Right Worshipful the Aldermen and Sheriffs of
the City of *LONDON*, and the Governours of
the *Hospitals*, on *Tuesday in Easter week last*; at
the Parish-Church of St. *Botolph Aldgate.*

By *Greg. Hascard*, Dean of *Windsor*,
and Chaplain in Ordinary to His
Majesty.

L O N D O N,

Printed for *William Crook*, at the *Green Dragon* without
Temple-Bar, near *Devereux-Court*. 1685.



A

S E R M O N

BY JAMES SWINH

LORD MAYOR

BY GEORGE HENRY DAVIS OF NEWCASTLE
AND CAPTAIN IN ORDNANCE TO HIS
Majesty.

London

Printed for Wm. Cotes, in the Queen's Head, near the Tower, with
the Privileg of the Royal Society of Friends, 1682.

EPHESIANS 4. 32.

And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.

THIS Apostle of the *Gentiles*, having converted many of these *Ephesians* to the Christian Faith, draws an Argument from thence, to persuade these new Disciples to leave their old Vices, ver. 17. While they were *Gentiles*, to be slaves to their Lusts and Follies, might come from the Lewdness of their Pagan Religion, which many times did allow them, and sometimes made them parts of their Devotion ; or from the darkness of their minds about the nature of God, and the Rewards and Punishments after death, ver. 18. 19. For when the great *Diana* was their Goddess, they thought it pure Religion to imitate her actions, though they were nothing else but folly and lewdness, and deem'd it true Devotion to draw her Pictures, and make Shrines for them ; but now, faith the Apostle, ch. 2. ver. 13. you have left the foppish and Idolatrous Service of *Diana's* Temple, and are baptiz'd into the Christian Religion, which is plainly evident to be Divine, her Precepts to be wise and good, and Rewards infinite : for you to live the lives of Pagans still, to change your Temples but not your Minds, is like

like the madness of *Diana's* rout, the greatest part knew not for what end they were met together; notwithstanding your zeal and noise for Christianity, you know not what that Religion means, and therefore the Apostle, ver. 20, tells his Christian Disciples, *that they had not so learned Christ*, that they had been well instructed that his Religion was Spiritual and Divine, that it taught and persuaded a change of their vicious nature, and the renovation of their mind and temper, and, contrary to the Follies that hitherto they were guilty of, they must now follow Truth and Honesty, Meekness and Charity, all sorts of Virtue and Goodness, which would far out-shine *Diana* and her Temples in all their glory; these Graces being the perfection of their nature, hugely beneficial to mankind, the Image of God enstamp't upon them, and the proper qualifications for the Divine state of Heaven; and, among the rest, he principally recommends the Virtues in my Text, which are the ease of Humane nature, the glee of Societies and Conversation, the best imitation of God and Christ, and the finest Livery and Ornament of a Christian, *And be ye kind one to another, &c.* Wherein,

1. Three great Duties or Virtues are commanded;
1. Kindness. 2. Tender-heartedness. 3. Readiness to forgive.
2. The Pattern to do all this by, and the reason of it, *even as God, &c.*

Though these three Duties are many times promiscuously us'd, and put one for another, yet they have different relations and respects, and may be fairly distinguish'd one from another, and seem to be rang'd and set in opposition to the contrary Vices of Anger and Wrath, Bitterness and Clamour, evil Speaking and Malice, ver. 31. As therefore Kindness is contrary to Bitterness or ill nature, it may express it self in these following particulars.

E. In

1. In pleasantness and easiness of Conversation, in sweetness of Disposition, and a courteous and obliging temper. The true Christian is not morose and sullen, but if any indifferent Custom or Usage of Life will please his Neighbour, he is ready to comply: if Age, or Temper, or other circumstance of Life, will not permit him in some things to do as his fellow Christian doth, yet he is not censorious, calling that a mortal Sin, which God hath allow'd for a liberty of Life: if he loves Retirement, yet he condemns not Society, and a more open Conversation, for a Vice: if he be not gay, he is not peevish, if of a grave deportment, yet not rough and sour, and hath been better taught, than to call that common and unclean which God hath cleans'd, and infringe the freedom of Mankind. He is of so generous a temper, as to become all things to all men in the natural liberties of Life, so as to pluck up the Briars and Thorns which *Adam* sow'd, ease the common burthens of this World, and sweeten the bitter thoughts of men arising from the condition of mortal Life; that man is not always religious when he is full of Melancholy. Christianity never bid its Disciples to dwell, like the Spirit in the Gospel, always among the Tombs; This is Superstition only, which is no mote true Religion, than to be out of our Wits is to be Wise, and a false conception of God, that thinks him a full of peevish Being, and makes his Servants such, thinking it Perfection to imitate such a God, as though he was displeas'd and angry with the little diversions and pleasures of Humane Life, *when the Earth is the Lords and the fulness thereof.* So kind, so bountiful a Being do we Christians serve, who planted us in a Paradise, not a Desart, and therefore to live thankfully to him, and with ease to our selves. When we have made our Sacrifice of Faith and Love, our

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Prayers and Devotion unto God, he then is pleas'd, and hath left all the World with its variety besides, to be enjoy'd by the discreet and sober Christian : the best men have the greatest reason to be cheerful and pleasant. Our Saviour deny'd not his presence to the Solemnity of a Marriage Feast ; and *Socrates* upon his Reed is not so fantastical a sight, as is the sullen and morose Christian, who frights men from Religion, thinking, that when they must become good, they must leave all the little diversions of Life, and ever after be black and melancholy in their minds. Thus to be kind, is not only our Convenience, but our Duty, we being oblig'd by our Religion to go out of our selves, and do all those things which may better the condition of the World, and make men more happy. And what doth more promote that, than such a temper as this, which knows how innocently to yield, and comply in the natural Liberties and lawful Freedoms of Life. The contrary Disposition usually carries with it the Spiritual sins of Uncharitableness, Arrogance and Pride. There was more pride in the Cynick's trampling upon the Philosopher's Carpets, than the Learned and Good man had in the Use of them ; while the kind man in this sense is humble and charitable, the salt and delight of all Society : and when Christ taught his Disciples the Christian Religion, he did not destroy Humanity, but made it a great Duty in it ; and men that are ever sullen and morose, have as little Religion as they have Manhood in them.

2. In a generous temper, ready and free to do good. Such a man knows, he is not born for himself, that his Strength, Riches, Wisdom, and other Abilities and Endowments of Nature, are not only to serve their Master ; but his King, Countrey, Parents, Friends, Neighbours, and all Mankind may justly challenge a share

share in them. He is not to be a dark Lanthorn, and only shine to himself, his Counsel is to direct the Paths of the Simple, his Power to relieve the oppressed, and his Abundance to supply the Poor, he being only a Trustee of God and Nature's Gifts; and if he use them not to the Benefit of others, is not only uncharitable, but Unjust. The man that is thus kind, perfects his own Nature, creates himself Pleasures beyond those of an Epicure, and lays the greatest Obligations upon others, (his former goodness being his store) against all the sad changes of Times and Fortune. If Magistrates are called Gods for their Authority and Power, good men may merit more that Title, nothing representing that infinite Being better, than a Soul universally bent to do good. 'Tis the delight of that immense Being, the joy of Angels, and the great Ingredient to the Happiness of glorify'd Souls above. It seems to be the top and Sum of all the great Characters of our dear Lord, that he *went about doing good.* 'Tis a sad ^{Act 10.}
^{38.} account that some of his pretended Servants are to make when they come to dye, only to tell the number of their merry Meetings, what Possessions they leave behind by their Care and Industry; not what naked Bodies they have cloath'd, what hungry Jaws they have fed, what Differences they have compos'd, what publick Dangers and Broils they have prevent-ed, what Errors they have reclaim'd; but they ate and drank; and as they came, so now they are descri-bing a Circle, and returning to their Mother Earth again; and because they hid their Talent in the Earth, us'd the Goodness of God only to their own sensual Interest, deserve to be condemn'd thither to sleep for ever: and 'twas well if so, but a severer doom follows them, pass'd by their Lord and Judge, *Begone into eternal misery, ye workers of iniquity, for I know you not.* If
 oaks

An.

Antonius told the Senate right, that he had lost a day when he had done no good, many, in the service of that Noble Heathen, have liv'd, only to lose their Lives ; they have existed only, the Christian Life not being measured by number of years, but by Virtue and Goodness that doth attend it, and he ill merits the name of Christian, who only pleaseth himself with the Title and Priviledges, the cheap and easie parts of Christianity, but displays it not in solid and substantial Acts, in doing good. The true Christian is not stingy and narrow, confining his kindness to his Friends, and his Party, but, like his God, makes his Sun to shine, and his Rain to fall upon the Just and Unjust, though especially the Household of Faith, yet the Dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from his Table, those that are in the right, and those that are out of the way, *Jew* and *Gentile*, in some degree all mankind taste of his Goodnes.

3. In abstaining from rigours, and refusing advantages, which Humane Laws may give him. In making of Laws, principal regard is had unto the Community, and many times particular Persons suffer by the Publick Interest. The good man will not entertain that advantage which the rigour of such Laws do give him, but charitably considers, that 'tis beside the intention of the Law-maker, and proceeds from the imperfection of Laws, and circumstances of Humane Affairs. The Intention of the Law may be otherwise, yet Fraud, Ignorance, an imperfect judgment of things to come, Accidents, and breach of Confidence, may pervert it. The kind man therefore sets up a Chancery in his own Breast, and desires to be called not only Just but Good, and thinks *Joseph* an excellent Pattern for his imitation, who, being a good man, merciful, full of humanity and clemency, would not, as the Law gave him leave, make

make a publick Example of the holy *Mary*, suspected by him to be unfaithful to her Vow, but only design'd a private dismission ; and knows that this is the best Character of the best of men, *Enoch* and *Noah*, *Job* and *Cornelius*, and *Christ* himself. And a signal Favour and Reward many times attends him, that whereas for a righteous man, a man of Legal Justice only, few or none will venture death to serve him, *but for a good man,* Rom. 3.7. *some will even dare to dye.* This obligation to Goodness and Equity, was antecedent to any right that Humane Laws could give him, being commanded by God, and enstamp'd upon his Nature when he was born ; and if the Law will absolve him from Injustice, yet it will not from Unequitablenes and Inhumanity. The man of rigour and severity is pleas'd with advantages that the Law may give him, having a colour to violate the eternal Laws of Nature, under the protection of a Temporary Law of Man, which was only short-sighted, and when it aim'd at a common good, never design'd a particular mischief ; but when that happen'd beyond the meaning of that Law, it suppos'd the Laws of Nature and Christianity in every mans breast would believe his fellow Christian.

The second Duty in the Text is Tender-heartednes, which consists of these following particulars.

I. In being extreamly sensible of the common troubles and miseries of our Christian Brethren ; this is the spring and original, the proper Source and cause of our Charity and Meekness, our Love and Relief of our fellow Beings. When our tempers are soft and sensible, and easily receive impressions from the Sufferings of others, we are pain'd within, and to ease our selves, we are ready to succour them, and then Nature discharging her Burthen and Oppression, creates both her own pleasure and satisfaction, and performs.

forms her Duty. The multitude of miserable Persons will not upon this account produce a continued trouble in your breast, for if the generality of mankind had this fellow-feeling, it would lessen the number; and as it is, the pleasure of doing good far surpasseth the pain in pitying, which is the objection against commiseration: if I may call it pain, or rather the natural delight of a good and generous mind; for there is pity and compassion in Heaven, in the breast of the blessed Jesus toward his distressed Members here, yet where no pain can dwell: this Temper is therefore to imitate the best of Natures above, consistent with our happiness, or is part of it there, and the Ornament and Beauty of our Soul here, founded in Nature, and perfected by the Divine Spirit, and may justly be called one of its chiefest Graces, and he that wants it, ceaseth to be a man and a Christian at the same time.

*1 Pet. 3.
8, 9.*

Dan. 4:27.

When therefore Nebuchadnezzar had put off his Humanity and pity, shewing no mercy to the distress'd, he suitably put on the shape of that without, which he was within, being degraded from a Man and King, and, like a Beast, graz'd so long, till he acknowledg'd, that the Heavens did rule, and shew'd mercy to the Poor, that he so cruelly had oppress'd. The Priest and the Levite who boasted of their Knowledg, their Oracles, and Temple at *Jersalem*, yet pass'd by, and disregarded the strip'd and wounded Stranger in their way, shew'd their Religion was but Faction and Hypocrisie, while the good *Samaritan*, who pity'd and poured in Oyl, though he had not so good a Temple, had more of God. Many times God sends Calamities upon men, to soften their hard temper, that by experience they might learn to succour others in their distress. And very often severe, yet suitable Judgments have pursued the cruel and unmerciful.

'Twas

Twas the fate of *Agag*, because his Sword had made
women childless, his Mother now should be so by his ^{1 Sam.}
Death; and because he never gave, he should re- ^{14. 33.}
 ceive no mercy. 'Tis one great thing to the making
 of a Devil, *Beelzebub*, that Prince of Flys, who is so
 far from pitying, he laughs at, and feasts upon the
 sores, the miseries of Mankind. Such that have hearts
 rejoicing in mischief, surpassing the hardness of
 Rocks, who can stand at shoar and with pleasure see
 others wrack't, and drown'd by storms and tem-
 pests, who can warm their hands at their Neighbours
 fires, and be as pleasant, as *Nero* was, upon the same
 occasion, who from smaller beginnings of cruelty,
 in being delighted to rip up, and see the panting
 hearts of Leverets, came at last to do the same unto
 his Mother. This is to be a Fiend, and to such per-
 fection of Vice may men arrive. God, to keep this
 Vice at the greatest distance, forbad *David* to build
 his Temple, because he had been concern'd in Wars
 and Blood: and the *Jews*, for the same reason, would
 not permit an Executioner to offer any thing to the
 Sanctuary. And we Christians have thus learn'd
 Christ, he having taught us, that when upon occa-
 sion our fellow Christians shall be full of tears and
 sorrow for the crosses and sad accidents of Life, that
 we should put on a suitable temper, having a fellow-
 feeling, to weep with them that weep, and mourn
 with them that mourn, that we may help them in
 their misery and distress.

*Hom. in
Mar. 27.*

2. In being ready to help them out of these trou-
 bles, by all the just means we can. Without this, our
 former pity is but an idle passion, and serves only to
 upbraid their misery, and disturb our selves. To
 view the naked and the destitute with Tears only,

C

and

and fruitless wishes, that some kind hand would bestow a Raiment upon them, serves only to distinguish a dead from a living Faith. For such men there are, whose Nature and Religion prompts them to pity and commiseration, yet Covetousness or expensive Vanities check the good inclination. When Sports or Pastimes, and the instruments of them, an Horse, or a Dog, shall have the preference of an honest Christian, and he shall scarce live, while the other is pamper'd ; when in the times of Dearth and Scarcenes, the plump Epicure feasts and surfeits within, while the poor Christian for want dyes in the common Streets, at best, in common with his Dogs ; he gives him only a few crumbs from his Table, to ease himself, the pitiable object disturbing his Pleasure. The Covetous, whose Barns are full, and Stores plentiful, out of an unjust suspicion of Providence, that some time or other he shall want these, or from an unaccountable and silly fancy of having much, and dying rich, keeps this abundance only to serve Rust and Mice, while his fellow Christian groans for want, and dyes unreliev'd. When Schisms rend the Church, and Factions the State, when Neighbourhoods and Societies are torn in pieces by Strifes and Contentions, yet the jolly Gallio cares for none of these. Fear in some, Covetousness in others, hopes of Advantage, and Idleness and Softness in many more, make these sad things look as indifferent and little, as the buzzings and quarrels of Wasps and Bees about a Flower. A melting passion for other mens misery, is no discharge of our Duty, till real Actions follow, and we become eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, give our counsel to the simple, our strength to the oppressed, our purse to the indigent,

and

and we become the common Granaries and supplies to the poor and weak : who can challenge these good things of us by the right of Nature, the Obligations of Religion, the Design of our Plenty ; but when we simply pity but not relieve, the sincerity of our Faith is justly question'd. When we hate our Brethren whom we have seen, (for that is hatred of them with God, to deny them Relief when we can give it) with whom we are joyn'd in the common necessities of Nature, and a more familiar Conversation, and only magnifie God , whom we have not ^{1 John 4.} seen², pretending deeper mystery and knowledge ³⁰ of him, and passion for him, our Love and Religion towards him turns into Hypocrisie and Falseness, Enthusiasm or Carnality.

3. In Gentleness when we punish. The sturdy nature of men, not to be drawn by the bands of Love, hath made Punishments absolutely necessary to Rule and Government, without which, Laws would be but Formalities and Entreaties : and therefore God himself, and the wisest Governours, have arm'd their Laws with the greatest terrors, to affright the refractory into Obedience ; not onely to be Scarecrows of Power, but to be really inflicted by the hands of Justice, where Mercy will not take place ; but where abatements of punishment will serve the end, viz. preserve Government, and cause Repentance, God and good men have never us'd utmost severity and destruction, which are due onely to the refractory and impenitent, and are rarely executed ; yet sometimes they are, to make wholsome Presidents and Examples to terrifie, and are good Land-marks to keep others from splitting upon the same Rocks, and destroying themselves. Utmost rigors many times lose

the end of Punishment, making men desperate ; alwayes scourging drives away Modesty, begets a brawny and a sensless temper, which will run away with its Rider, and contemns its unmerciful Gover-nour ; who, while he endeavours to reform some sort of Vice in others, by such severe Methods, he begets and cherisheth another sort of Vice in himself, Unmercifulness being as great a Vice as any. Far unlike to the temper of Jesus, whose Person and Authority, the Jews so maliciously contemned and per-fecuted, whō would have accepted of their Repen-tance for their Blasphemy and Disobedience, and gi-ven them a Reprieve; and when their sturdy Malice against him forc'd him to a sentence, he did it like the good Emperour, (only in an higher degree) with Tears, and felt those Pains and Sorrows for them, which they would not feel for themselves. Justice it self only there takes place, whera Mercy could not ; much less must rigorous Execution be us'd, when lighter Chastisements and softer Proceed-ings will reclaim the Offender. As Magistrates are called Gods, so in this they must be like God, who, when he gōes to take Vengeance of his Enemies, (the Divine Government calling for a particular instance of severity) is said to rise out of his place, and do a Work strange to his Nature, Mercy and Forgiveness, Lenity and Longanimity being his delight, and essen-tial to him.

*34. 26. 21.
28. 21.*

4. In the distribution of Charity and Alms, and providing for the necessities of the Poor, tender-heartednes being the natural Spring from whence it doth arise. Of all the Duties in the Christian Relig-ion, none carry so many Arguments with them to enforce their Practice, as this. 'Tis a Duty of an easie per-

performance, Charity not being confin'd to the building of Churches and Hospitals, and other expensive Instances, but expresseth it self, in good Counsel, devout Prayers, good Reports, and the like, which the great and rich in Honour may receive, and the poor can, and ought to give. Charity is but reverence which we owe to our common Nature, the Poor having *Cæsar's* Image and Superscription enstamp'd upon them, and we may say of them as *Seneca* did of Servants ; *Servi sunt, imo homines, servi sunt, imo contubernales, servi sunt, imo humiles amici, servi sunt, imo conservi* : in such near relation they stand to the God of Heaven, our common Parent. 'Tis a debt that we owe them, and when we pay it not, we are unrighteous and unjust. Under the rigid Law of *Moses*, and among the *Jews*, a People given to Covetousness and Exaction, how careful, how bountiful, was Divine Providence, when he gave them Laws, to provide for the distressed and poor. And under the new Dispensation to recommend the Duty. The *ελεημων* is the *τέλειος*, the charitable is the perfect man. To make the Duty honourable and great, God takes the Charity done to one of his poor as done to himself ; and as he is pleas'd to accept it, we are put in a capacity of obliging him, who gave us all that we enjoy. Upon this account, we more eminently lay up Treasure in Heaven, and by filling the poor mans Box here, we become Heirs to the many Mansions in our Fathers house. In nothing more we imitate that mighty Being above, to whom, all Creatures, cloth'd in their different Liveries, put up their cryes and groans for the Pensions and Charity of Heaven, and God's the Almoner there ; then in being Stewards to his good things, the plenty of Earth,

Earth, we freely make distribution of them to relieve the wants of others. Otherwise we forfeit the great end of Temporal Blessings, having an happy opportunity of doing good to others, and to procure a Blessing upon our selves. For besides the Rewards above, and the Provisions we make to our selves here from the grateful poor, who are many times advanc'd to a better condition, when the Changes and Revolutions in the World may wheel us about into lower and meaner circumstances of Life, what strange Deliverances and unexpected Supplies, new Friends and secret Helps, in a silent and invisible way, have followed our former Charity. But what need I? I must not urge any more Arguments to enforce the practice of this mighty Duty to this Auditory, which hath so often heard them upon this occasion, and so well have practis'd them. The Charity that this Ancient and Renowned City, and the generous Members of it, have shewn, in various instances, and numerous expressions of it, hath told the Pagan World, what a beneficial thing true Christianity is to mankind, confuted the Scandal cast upon our Reformed Church of *England* by her Adversaries, that our Religion consists only in Faith and Profession, but doing no good Works; it hath added lustre to your Names and City; you have wip'd away the Tears, and still'd the Groans of the poor and destitute, chang'd their Curses into Prayers, and all Generations shall call you blessed. And therefore I do not so much exhort as praise, and give our Saviours blessing to you, *Blessed is that Servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing.* And therefore, not for ostentation but encouragement, I will give you a true report of the great number of poor Chil-

Children and other People maintained in the several Hospitals, under the pious Care of the Lord Mayor, Commonalty, and Citizens of the City of London, the year last past.

Children put forth Apprentices, and dis- charg'd out of Christ's Hospital	86.
Still remaining under the Care and Charge of the said Hospital	772.
There have been cured in the Hospital of St. Bartholomew, of wounded, sick, and diseased Persons	1735.
Persons remaining under Cure in the said Hospital	258.
In the Hospital of St. Thomas, cured the last year	1595.
Still under Cure	242.
Vagrants and indigent Persons received into the Hospital of Bridewell, reliev'd and sent by Passes into their Native Countreys	1279.
Maintain'd and brought up in divers Arts and Trades	133.
Besides the Hospital of Bethlehem, which is of excellent Use and great necessity, for the keeping and curing of Distracted Persons.	
There have been brought into that Hospi- tal the last year, distracted Men and Women	59.
Cured of the Lunacy, and discharged thence	35.
Now remaining under their care, and pro- vided with Physick and other Relief at the Hospitals Charge	119.
	Not-

Notwithstanding the great Losses all these Hospitals have sustained by the late dreadful Fire in September 1666. and other Fires which have happen'd in and about the City of London.

There can be no more powerful Argument used to provoke you unto such good Works as these, than what our Saviour hath laid down, to excite our affections and care towards the Maimed the Lame and the Blind. Luke 14. 14. *And thou shalt be Blessed, for they cannot recompence thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the Resurrection of the Just.*

The third Duty in the Text is readiness to forgive; which may express it self in these following particulars.

1. Though we be the offended, yet to seek peace with the offending Party; a Principle of Peace and Charity will be naturally acting, and travels with pain to it self, till it bring forth the fruits of Love and Reconciliation; such good nature is not at ease and quiet with it self, not because it hath received an Injury, but because the pleasant exercise of mutual Love and Friendship is stopt, and therefore labours first, to remove the dirt and rubbish that damm'd it up, that it might flow again in its gentle stream; To seek Peace, is far from being a sign of a mean and Abject Spirit, that 'tis imitating the greatest, most infinite Being, God, who intreats his Enemies to be reconcil'd, and when the prodigal Sons of Adam, who scorned their Father and his House before, are at distance, he runs out, meets them in their return, and prevents them with his Pardon and Love: And many times the brave and the generous, the Prince and the Conquerour have sent out their Pardons, before the Rebel hath laid down his Arms. The offending Party sometimes out

out of ignorance of your good Nature, or because he is an ill man, thinks no injur'd Person can be heartily reconcil'd, but is smooth'd over only for a time, while 'tis his Interest and better Opportunity of Revenge (which is a strange imputation to Humane Nature and Christian Religion) and therefore out of despair of Peace, continues in a State of War with you; by seeking Peace, you undeceive his Error, you heap Coals of Fire upon his Head, melting him down into softness and repentance, he is more ashamed and confounded at his Fault and mistake; you humble him more by your Mercy than Severity, your kindness takes Revenge, your Reputation is the fairer, and 'tis your Interest, you gaining that by this easie Method, which might possibly have been lost by a more tedious and troublesome way of Pride and Rigor: there are indeed cross Tempers in the World, which grow harder by your yielding, and run backwards, because you are coming on, but for the respect of Mankind, I hope these are not many, and the worst of them are mollified in some degree, those that are not, ill deserve the name and shape they bear, and will not excuse in the general this Duty of being forward and zealous to forgive, and make Peace, which is our Honour and Christianity.

2. We must not stick upon too difficult terms of Reconciliation, either above the Merit of the Fault, or always equal to it. Satisfaction by way of Punishment above the Merit of the Crime, shows us rigid and unjust, and exceeds the Severity of the Mosaick Law, which allowed only a Tooth for a Tooth but not an Eye for a Tooth, or an Head for an Eye in Compensation by way of payment or profit, above old

the Nature of the Fault, shews the Exactor of it is Coveteous and Cruel, and for Interest sake rejoyceth in Evil, and is pleas'd with Offences because of advantage, and would unchristianly and meanly prostitute his Fame and Religion too, so he might gain by it; always to stick upon equal satisfactions, to have the Injury and Atonement weighed in nice Ballances, to come to Granes and Scruples, is far from being a good or benign Man, a merciful or Charitable Person, far from the Evangelical Temper, which rests not in a dry and sullen Justice, but softens into Clemency and Grace. Government it self and points of Honour exceed not the bounds of Justice; in resenting Injuries, always, as near, as decently they can, they regard Charity and Mercy, much more private Persons in their Circumstances and Condition ought to do. Men of Rigour know not, or forget the Constitution of Mankind, who are transgressing one against another, and if Forgiveness or abatement of Punishment and Satisfaction did not take place, the World must turn into Confusion, or nothing heard of, besides Judges and Tribunals. Such a man is not always the wisest, demanding Retaliation for Injuries, and to retreive his Fame by the smartest Penalties, he provokes but the World to Wrath for the time of his offending; and if he clear his Reputation by such hard Methods, he foysl it at the same time, meriting the Title of severe and Cruel, as great a reproach as any; while easie Conditions would gain his end as well, viz. Keep his Fame and advance it higher, giving him the Title of good and gracious, that God himself is pleas'd with; nothing being more inhumane, then, when Life or a plentiful way of living, a Christians Fortune and his Peace are to be given in Composition to any implacable

ble Person of private Circumstances, for a trivial los^t,
undecent carriage, or angry and passionate words.

3. To do the offending Party any good. This is the height of Goodnes^t, and by Christ is call'd Perfection: and to this we have an obligation, not only from the greatness of Rewards, which are promis'd to so great a mind, but from our own act and the nature of Forgiveness. For where you intirely pardon, you restore the man into his former circumstances and condition, and if your Charity was due to him before, so 'tis now. Our Prudence and our Religion sometimes bid us not be too credulous in thinking the repentance of the offending Party to be sincere, nor too profuse, without distinction in scattering our Mercies, yet to be too severe in judging, is often Cruelty, and many times an hypocritical pretence to stop a merciful or a bountiful hand. Or to be too rigid about the after carriage of the Penitent, as though hereafter he was to be impeccable, and expect no grace for common Errours and Frailties, this is Severity and Unmercifulness, and you are so far from pardoning, that you punish still: for, before, he had the allowance of all mankind, but now you have taken it away: and is far from the kind dealings of God with Offenders, to whom, upon repentance, when he promises remission of sins, he means, not only you shall escape an Hell, *non pasces in truce corvo*, but you shall enjoy an Heaven. To pretend to pardon, and when the opportunity of doing a great good to the Delinquent is come, then to deny him, is only delaying the Punishment to a more convenient season, for a more heavy revenge. If your Mercy be misplac'd and abus'd, it only aggravates his Crime you pardon, but lessons not your

Goodness, whose purpose was honest and great of doing well. It hath been the immortal honour of the great and brave, that they have not only forgiven their Enemies, but advanc'd them, and many times it hath prov'd their Interest; candour and fence of their Princes Goodnes and their own Offences hath made them surer Friends and more faithful Servants. 'Tis a Proverb that only fits the Vulgars Mouths who know how to forgive, but not to forget. The Mercies of the noble and truly Christian are clean and large, not fetter'd with too many Conditions and Restrictions, endeavouring more to be generously good, than nicely wise; and though his Mercy should not gain its excellent end to reclaim the Offender, yet 'tis the Perfection of his own Nature, and the advancement of his Glory.

Secondly, the Pattern to do this by, and the reason of it. *Even as God, for Christs sake, hath forgiven you.* The obligation to this is strong, if we consider these two things.

1. Our selves, or what we are. He knows not himself to be a man, who will not write himself naturally ignorant and perverse, little and proud, insolent and disobedient, full of so many follies and basenes, that here we want, shall I call it ill, or good and proper Language to express his Character. His Body is compounded of the Elements common to the Bruits over whom he domineers, and scorns; subject to more Diseases and greater filth; his better part, his Soul, the Image of God, is strangely corrupted and defac'd, and the worse now, because originally so good, his carriage rude and ungrateful towards his Maker, cruel and inhumane towards his Fellows, superstitious in his Devotion, silly and false

in his Conversation ; in short, whatever is mean, wicked, or imperfect, in some degree at least, we may charge on man, he being prone to all these, and in a Passion may cry out, *Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him ?* And which more shews what a strange Being Man is, the eminent Kindness and Providence of God over him, makes him conceited, that he is a Being very great in himself, useful unto God, and merits this care at his hands. For such a Being as this, that wants so much mercy, not to shew any, that receives so much bounty, not to give, that is supported and lives by the immense Love and Charity, to be envious and cruel, confutes his pretence, that he is not the Image of God, he is only a clod of Earth temper'd with Blood, *lutum sanguine maceratum*, as was said of one of the vilest of the whole Creation. Should Malefactors in their Prisons upbraid one another with their Crimes, or deny their mutual Pardons for Offences committed among themselves, would it not tempt their Prince to deny them a reprieve ; should Slaves, Beggars and Hospitals, fall out and implead one another, for wry Faces, undecent Words, and stand upon Terms of Honour and be implacable ; would it not move laughter in the Beholder, and call for a lash to discipline them into Meekness and Love among themselves ? Such Creatures are men, ill meriting that noble name, who for their Hatred and Malice, their Revenge and Cruelty among themselves, are as much laugh'd at, and condemn'd by the great and knowing Spirits above, as we scorn Frogs and Lice, and other Vermin here. Our Prayers for pardon of Sin, are but confident Provocations, while we are Cruel and entertain Revenge ; with what Brow can we expect that God should.

should every day forgive, when we sometimes will not pardon a single Offence all our Life. Do we not come to crucifie the Lord of Life again, and make him the daily bloody Sacrifice, when we bring our Hatred and Malice, ob that holy Board of Love and Charity. A Wolf to feast with a Lamb, and instead of making him an Atonement for our Sin, we make him the Aggravation of it. Tyrants and men of Blood seldom dye dry Deaths, and the unmerciful, rarely find Mercy ; and men of implacable Spirits, of Soveriegn and Rigour, of Malice and Revenge, are most commonly hated and contemn'd by all, while they live, dye without a Tear, and are laughted unto their Graves. So it is our Interest and Reputation here, as well as our Religion and Heavens Reward hereafter, to be of a forgiving Temper.

2. The Nature of God and his Proceedings with Men, among all the imitable things of the Divine Nature none are so fairly prop's'd, and recommended, as the long Suffering and Mercy of God, the frequency of its exercise, the absolute Necessity of it for mankind, make it appear the most lovely among all his mighty Attributes, there being no sort of men so good and circumspect in their Demeanour here, but must daily beg the Divine Pardon and Mercy ; the best of men have therefore thus humbled themselves. *Lord who knows how oft he offends, cleanse thou me from my secret Faults,* describing their Sins with all their aggravating Circumstances, of Number, Scandal, Presumption, and the like, not for Rhetorick or Passion sake, to make a tedious Prayer, but to make them truly sensible of Gods Mercy and Forgiveness. He that knows not this, is the worst of Men, having sin'd himself into Stupidity, and made his Condition desperate. Shall not therefore

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the superabundant Mercy of God, and his infinite patience towards Mankind, lead them into an imitation to Pitty, and forgive their offending Brother. 'Tis not the Nature of God ~~willingly to grieve the Children of Men~~, and shall we please our selves with Severitys, be unconcern'd at common Calamities, and make Vengeance upon our Enemies, our pleasure and pastime, hath he not commanded us to forgive our Brethren till Seventy times Seven, and his Mercy is as far above ours as Heaven is from Earth, and so far removes our Sins from us : Shall his Mercy reach unto the Heavens and his Truth unto the Clouds, and shall our kindness and bowels being only confind to our little selves ? We sin, and God is provoked every day, and he punisbeth and lightly too once in an Age, being slow to Anger and of great Mercy, but we are quick with Revenge, usurping the Priviledge of God, making Vengeance our own, never forgiving, sometimes not on a dying Bed, but persuing the Memory and Ghost of our Enemy beyond the grave, and entailing Quarrels upon Posterities beyond the third and fourth Generation, and contrary to the Mercies of God our Anger endures for ever : Should our desire of Revenge take place, Fire every day would be coming down from Heaven, and Plagues and Mildews would be as common as our Breath to destroy our Adversaries, which in their several turns would almost be the Race of Mankind, till we existed alone, as troublesome to our selves as to our fellows. Is not the Honour of God as great as ours, his Power as large, and weleſſ serviceable to him than to one another ? Had we been condemned to endless Miseries upon our first Offence, or return'd to our former nothing, there had never been les joy in Heaven, there are infinite numbers of

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Spirits about his Throne, to praise his Name, and execute his Will; or he could out of stones have rais'd up Children to magnifie the God of Abraham, or enjoy'd himself in the same infinite manner before the World was, but because he would be Merciful, he therefore would be Merciful, not compell'd by any necessity from without or from within; and must our dealings and conversation in Rigors in Extremities with our fellow Christians, of the same stamp of Nature and Religion with us, and so useful to us, be so far unlike to the Methods of this mighty Being? When we were Bankrupts, and had nothing to compound our Debts with Heaven except God perfectly forgave all, which he so freely hath done, ought not we to pardon and relieve, to be easily reconcill'd, and Friends to those that offend us? This Argument is so plain and so cogent, so useful to us and excellent in its Nature, that to add more would be to trifl, and therefore I shall conclude with St Paul's entreaty, *If there be therefore any Consolation in Christ, if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowship of the Spirit, if any Bowels and Mercies, which give us so much praise and satisfaction of Mind here and rewards hereafter: Think on these things, God Almighty grant it for the sake of his Son; To whom be Glory and Praise both now and for evermore. Amen.*

F I N I S.

